



## Updated (Bivalent) Booster FAQs

1. **What is a bivalent vaccine? Is this the Omicron vaccine? What is the updated vaccine?**

The FDA has authorized the updated (bivalent) booster for **Moderna** for adults 18 years and older and for **Pfizer** for those 12 years and older. Everyone 12+ who has had their primary series should get the updated booster at least 2 months following any COVID vaccine or booster dose. The recommended COVID-19 vaccine schedule can be found [here](#).

The updated boosters are now the only booster doses that are available to those 12 years and older. Those 12 years and older are no longer eligible for the original boosters.

The FDA authorized the updated boosters after reviewing data showing the boosters **improved protection against currently circulating variants**. The original boosters contained one strain while the updated (bivalent) boosters add the Omicron strains that have been causing the most recent cases.

2. **Why should I get an updated booster? What are the advantages?**

Many vaccines require a booster dose to ensure continued protection against severe disease. Protection from infection can decrease over time. Booster doses are a safe way to restore protection and reduce severe outcomes of COVID-19, such as hospitalization and death. Research has shown that vaccination can reduce the risk of long COVID as well.

The updated boosters provide greater protection than the original boosters against the Omicron strains that are causing the most cases right now.

3. **Does the updated booster only protect me from Omicron variants? What if there's a new variant?**

The updated boosters are bivalent, which means they include the original vaccine AND vaccine that targets the current Omicron variants (BA.4/5). The original boosters provided strong protection against severe disease even as new variants became dominant. The updated boosters may also provide better protection against infection. Even if there's another new variant, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have shown that they can protect against severe disease from many different variants.

4. **Can children 5 to 11 get an updated booster?**

No. Children ages 5 to 11 are not authorized for a second booster dose. If they still need a first booster dose, they'll be given the original booster. We expect that an updated booster will be authorized for this age group later in the Fall.

5. **Is Moderna or Pfizer's updated booster more effective than the other?**

No! Get whichever booster is available to you.



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**6. How many booster doses are recommended?**

Get ONE updated booster if you are 12 years or older and had your last dose at least 2 months ago. It doesn't matter how many booster doses you've had in the past.

**7. Can I still get an updated booster even if I previously had 1 or more boosters? What if I haven't yet had booster?**

Yes! You can get an updated booster if you are 12 years or older and your last dose was at least 2 months ago. It doesn't matter if you've never had a booster dose or if you've had two.

**8. Can I get my flu shot at the same time as a COVID booster?**

Yes! It is important that you get both a COVID-19 booster dose and a flu shot to protect against becoming severely sick from either virus. The vaccines are just as effective when you get them at the same time as they are if you get them separately.

**9. Should I wait to get an updated booster until later in the Fall?**

No! Get your booster once it's been 2 months since your last dose or 3 months since a COVID-19 infection.

**10. I had COVID recently. Should I get an updated booster?**

Yes, but you can wait 3 months after you last tested positive for COVID-19 to get a booster.

**11. I've had side effects from other COVID vaccine doses. Will I get them from this booster? Why does this happen?**

Side effects after getting a COVID-19 vaccine can vary from person to person. Some people experience a little discomfort and can continue to go about their day. Others have side effects that affect their ability to do daily activities. Side effects generally go away in a few days. Whether you have side effects or not, your body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19.

Side effects reported after getting a booster dose were similar to those reported after other doses. Most side effects were mild to moderate. The most commonly reported side effects were:

- Fever
- Headache
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Pain at the injection site